

PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE DIVISION[645]

Adopted and Filed

Rule making related to physical therapist and occupational therapist supervision

The Board of Physical and Occupational Therapy hereby amends Chapter 200, “Licensure of Physical Therapists and Physical Therapist Assistants,” Chapter 203, “Continuing Education for Physical Therapists and Physical Therapist Assistants,” and Chapter 206, “Licensure of Occupational Therapists and Occupational Therapy Assistants,” Iowa Administrative Code.

Legal Authority for Rule Making

This rule making is adopted under the authority provided in Iowa Code chapters 148A and 148B and Iowa Code sections 147.76 and 272C.3.

State or Federal Law Implemented

This rule making implements, in whole or in part, Iowa Code chapters 148A and 148B.

Purpose and Summary

The amendments revise the supervision requirements for physical therapy and occupational therapy, add requirements for physical therapy and occupational therapy supervision by telehealth, revise the limit on the number of physical therapist assistants who can be supervised by a physical therapist, remove the maximum of physical therapist delegation based on the patient’s health care residency or admission status, add new requirements for the minimum frequency of a physical therapist’s interaction with a client and revise the continuing education requirements for supervising physical therapy students for clinical education.

Public Comment and Changes to Rule Making

Notice of Intended Action for this rule making was published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin on April 25, 2018, as **ARC 3762C**. A public hearing was held on May 15, 2018, at 8 a.m. in the Fifth Floor Board Conference Room 526, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa. Two individuals attended and were in support of the amendments. One comment was received in support of the amendments. No changes from the Notice have been made.

Adoption of Rule Making

This rule making was adopted by the Board on June 8, 2018.

Fiscal Impact

This rule making has no fiscal impact to the State of Iowa.

Jobs Impact

After analysis and review of this rule making, no impact on jobs has been found.

Waivers

A waiver provision is not included in this rule making because all administrative rules of the professional licensure boards in the Professional Licensure Division are subject to the waiver provisions accorded under 645—Chapter 18.

Review by Administrative Rules Review Committee

The Administrative Rules Review Committee, a bipartisan legislative committee which oversees rule making by executive branch agencies, may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this rule making at its [regular monthly meeting](#) or at a special meeting. The Committee's meetings are open to the public, and interested persons may be heard as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.8(6).

Effective Date

This rule making will become effective on August 8, 2018.

The following rule-making actions are adopted:

ITEM 1. Rescind rule 645—200.6(272C) and adopt the following **new** rule in lieu thereof:

645—200.6(147) Delegation by a supervising physical therapist. A supervising physical therapist may delegate the performance of physical therapy services to a physical therapist assistant only if done in accordance with the statutes and rules governing the practice of physical therapy. A physical therapist assistant may assist in the practice of physical therapy only to the extent allowed by the supervising physical therapist. The supervisory requirements stated in this rule are minimal. It is the professional responsibility and duty of the supervising physical therapist to provide the physical therapist assistant with more supervision if deemed necessary in the supervising physical therapist's professional judgment.

200.6(1) Supervision requirements. A supervising physical therapist who delegates the performance of physical therapy services to a physical therapist assistant shall provide supervision to the physical therapist assistant at all times when the physical therapist assistant is providing delegated physical therapy services. Supervision means that the physical therapist shall be readily available on site or telephonically anytime the physical therapist assistant is providing physical therapy services so that the physical therapist assistant may contact the physical therapist for advice, assistance, or instruction.

200.6(2) Functions that cannot be delegated. The following are functions that only a physical therapist may provide and that cannot be delegated to a physical therapist assistant:

- a. Interpretation of referrals;
- b. Initial physical therapy evaluation and reevaluations;
- c. Identification, determination, or modification of patient problems, goals, and plans of care;
- d. Final discharge evaluation and establishment of a discharge plan;
- e. Delegation of and instruction in the physical therapy services to be rendered by a physical therapist assistant or unlicensed assistive personnel including, but not limited to, specific tasks or procedures, precautions, special problems, and contraindicated procedures; and
- f. Timely review of documentation, reexamination of the patient, and revision of the plan of care when indicated.

200.6(3) Physical therapist responsibilities. At all times, the supervising physical therapist shall be responsible for the physical therapy plan of care and for all physical therapy services provided, including all physical therapy services delegated to a physical therapist assistant. In addition, the supervising physical therapist shall:

- a. Be responsible for the evaluation and development of a plan of care for use by the physical therapist assistant; and
- b. Not delegate a physical therapy service that exceeds the competency or skill set of the physical therapist assistant; and
- c. Ensure that a physical therapist assistant holds an active physical therapist assistant license issued by the board; and
- d. Ensure that a physical therapist assistant is aware of how the supervising physical therapist can be contacted telephonically when the physical therapist is not providing on-site supervision; and

e. Arrange for an alternate physical therapist to provide supervision when the physical therapist has scheduled or unscheduled absences during time periods in which a physical therapist assistant will be providing delegated physical therapy services; and

f. Ensure that a physical therapist assistant is informed when a patient's plan of care is transferred to a different supervising physical therapist; and

g. Directly participate in physical therapy services upon the physical therapist assistant's request for a reexamination, when a change in the plan of care is needed, prior to any planned discharge, and in response to a change in the patient's medical status; and

h. Hold regularly scheduled meetings with the physical therapist assistant to evaluate the physical therapist assistant's performance, assess the progress of a patient, and make changes to the plan of care as needed. The frequency of meetings should be determined by the supervising physical therapist based on the needs of the patient, the supervisory needs of the physical therapist assistant, and any planned discharge. The supervising physical therapist shall provide direction and instruction to the physical therapist assistant that are adequate to ensure the safety and welfare of the patient.

200.6(4) *Physical therapist assistant responsibilities.* A physical therapist assistant shall only provide physical therapy services under the supervision of a physical therapist. In addition, the physical therapist assistant shall:

a. Only provide physical therapy services that have been delegated by the supervising physical therapist; and

b. Only provide physical therapy services that are within the competency and skill set of the physical therapist assistant; and

c. Consult the supervising physical therapist if the physical therapist assistant believes that any procedure is not in the best interest of the patient; and

d. Contact the supervising physical therapist regarding any change or lack of change in a patient's condition that may require assessment by the supervising physical therapist; and

e. Refer inquiries that require interpretation to the supervising physical therapist; and

f. Ensure that the identification of the supervising physical therapist is included in the documentation for any visit when physical therapy services were provided by the physical therapist assistant; and

g. Only sign a treatment record if the provision of physical therapy services was done in accordance with the statutes and rules governing the practice of a physical therapist assistant.

200.6(5) *Ratio.* A physical therapist shall determine the number of physical therapist assistants who can be supervised safely and competently and shall not exceed that number; but in no case shall a physical therapist supervise more than four physical therapist assistants per calendar day. A physical therapist assistant who performs any delegated physical therapy services on behalf of the supervising physical therapist on a particular day shall be counted in determining the maximum ratio, regardless of the location of the physical therapist assistant or the number of patients treated.

200.6(6) *Minimum frequency of direct participation by a supervising physical therapist.* A supervising physical therapist shall use professional judgment to determine how frequently the physical therapist needs to directly participate in physical therapy services when delegating to a physical therapist assistant, the frequency of which shall be based on the needs of the patient. Direct participation can occur through an in-person or telehealth visit. The supervising physical therapist shall ensure that the patient record clearly indicates which visits included direct participation by the supervising physical therapist. The following are the minimum standards, which are expected to be exceeded when dictated by the supervising physical therapist's professional judgment, for the required frequency of direct participation by the supervising physical therapist when physical therapy services involve delegation to a physical therapist assistant:

a. *Hospital inpatient and skilled nursing.* For hospital inpatients and skilled nursing patients, a supervising physical therapist must directly participate in physical therapy services a minimum of once per calendar week. A calendar week is defined as Sunday through Saturday.

b. All other settings. In all other settings, a supervising physical therapist must directly participate in the provision of physical therapy services at least every eighth visit or every 30 calendar days, whichever comes first.

200.6(7) Unlicensed assistive personnel. A physical therapist is responsible for patient care provided by unlicensed assistive personnel under the physical therapist's supervision. A physical therapist is responsible for ensuring the qualifications of any unlicensed assistive personnel and shall maintain written documentation of their education or training. Unlicensed assistive personnel may assist a physical therapist assistant in the delivery of physical therapy services only if the physical therapist assistant maintains in-sight supervision of the unlicensed assistive personnel and the physical therapist assistant is primarily and significantly involved in the patient's care. Unlicensed assistive personnel shall not provide independent patient care unless each of the following standards is satisfied:

- a.* The physical therapist has direct participation in the patient's treatment or evaluation, or both, each treatment day;
- b.* Unlicensed assistive personnel may provide independent patient care only while under the on-site supervision of the physical therapist;
- c.* Documentation made in a physical therapy record by unlicensed assistive personnel shall be cosigned by the physical therapist; and
- d.* The physical therapist provides periodic reevaluation of any unlicensed assistive personnel's performance in relation to the patient.

ITEM 2. Amend subparagraph **203.3(2)“a”(4)** as follows:

(4) Directly supervising students for clinical education ~~if the physical therapist or physical therapist assistant who is supervising is an American Physical Therapy Association Advanced Credentialed Clinical Instructor and~~ if the student students being supervised ~~is~~ are from an accredited physical therapist or physical therapist assistant program and ~~is~~ are participating in a full-time clinical experience (defined as approximately 40 hours per week, ranging from 1 to 18 weeks). One hour will be awarded for every 160 contact hours of supervision. A maximum of 8 hours for a physical therapist and 4 hours for a physical therapist assistant may be awarded per biennium. The physical therapist or physical therapist assistant must have documentation from the accredited educational program indicating the number of hours spent supervising a student.

ITEM 3. Amend paragraphs **206.8(2)“a”** and **“b”** as follows:

- a.* Provide supervision to a licensed OTA, OT limited permit holder and OTA limited permit holder anytime occupational therapy services are rendered. Supervision may be provided on site or through the use of telecommunication or other technology.
- b.* ~~Provide on-site supervision or supervision by telecommunication as long as the occupational therapy services are rendered in accordance with the provisions of subrule 206.8(5).~~ Ensure that every licensed OTA, OT limited permit holder and OTA limited permit holder being supervised is aware of who the supervisor is and how the supervisor can be contacted anytime occupational therapy services are rendered.

ITEM 4. Amend subrule 206.8(5) as follows:

206.8(5) The Minimum frequency of OT interaction. At a minimum, an OT must directly participate in treatment including direct face-to-face patient contact, either in person or through a telehealth visit, every twelfth visit or 60 calendar days, whichever comes first, for all patients regardless of setting and must document each visit. The occupational therapist shall participate at a higher frequency when the standard of care dictates.

ITEM 5. Amend paragraph **206.8(6)“a”** as follows:

- a.* The occupational therapy assistant:
 - (1) to (6) No change.
 - (7) ~~Shall have on-site or immediate telecommunicative supervision as long as the occupational therapy services are rendered in accordance with the provisions of subrule 206.8(5)~~ Shall be supervised

by an occupational therapist, either on site or through the use of telecommunication or other technology, at all times when occupational therapy services are being rendered;

(8) May receive supervision from any number of occupational therapists; and

(9) ~~Shall maintain documentation of supervision on a daily basis that shall be available for review upon request of the board~~ Shall record on every patient chart the name of the OTA's supervisor for each treatment session.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: For replacement pages for IAC, see IAC Supplement 7/4/18.